## **EXHIBIT 2**

## In The Matter Of:

Christopher B. Hardy vs.
Carthage Independent School District

Elzie Hicks December 30, 2021

CONTINENTAL COURT REPORTERS, INC.-Houston
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13	************	13	1	8-page PDF - Copy of letter -	14
14	ORAL DEPOSITION OF ELZIE HICKS, produced as a	14		Re: EEOC Charge No. 450-2018-00224, Bates CISD	
15	witness at the instance of the Plaintiff and duly sworn,	15		000001 through 000008	
16	was taken in the above-styled and numbered cause on the	16	2	1-page PDF - Carthage ISD Organizational Chart, 2016-2017	22
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18	4:44 p.m., via remote conference, before Roland W.	18	4	2-page PDF - Superintendent	47
19	Scott, Certified Shorthand Reporter in and for the State	19		Compensation, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018	
20	of Texas, reported by computerized stenotype machine at	20	5	5-page PDF - Safety	51
21	No. 1 Bulldog Drive, Carthage, Texas 75633, pursuant to	21		Program/Risk Management, 04/21/2014	
22	the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the provisions	22	6		53
23	stated on the record or attached hereto.	23	0	3-page PDF - Safety Program/Risk Management,	55
24		24		10/2/2015	
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12:57:05-12:58:23

- 1 PROCEEDINGS
- 2 THE REPORTER: My name is Roland Scott,
- 3 Texas CSR 2269. I am reporting the deposition remotely
- 4 by stenographic means from Alvin, Texas. The witness is
- 5 located at No. 1 Bulldog Drive, Carthage, Texas.
- 6 MR. FOSTER: My name is Ben Foster; and I
- 7 am counsel for the Plaintiff in this case, Christopher
- 8 Hardy.
- 9 MS. MOONEY: I'm Andrea Mooney, and I'm
- 10 counsel for Carthage Independent School District.
- 11 MR. EICHELBAUM: Dennis Eichelbaum,
- 12 counsel for the Defendant.
- 13 MS. DARLING: Emma Darling, counsel for
- 14 the Defendant.
- 15 ELZIE HICKS,
- 16 having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:
- 17 **EXAMINATION**
- 18 BY MR. FOSTER:
- 19 Q. Good afternoon, Mr. Hicks.
- 20 A. Good afternoon.
- 21 Q. Before we get started, a couple housekeeping
- 22 matters.
- Have you ever been deposed before?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 Q. Okay. And, so, obviously you've never had a

12:59:23-01:00:27

1 Q. All right. I want to start by just asking you:

- 2 What is your role in relationship to the Carthage
- 3 Independent School District?
- 4 A. I'm a Board member at the Carthage Independent
- 5 School District.
- 6 Q. Okay. Does that mean you're on the school
- 7 Board of the school district?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. And that's an elected position, right?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. How long have you served on the Board?
- 12 A. Approximately 14 years, 15 years, somewhere in
- 13 there.
- 14 Q. How many Board members are there?
- 15 A. There are six besides myself.
- 16 Q. So, seven total, right?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Okay. And does that number -- has that number
- 19 changed over the years; or the whole time you've been on
- 20 the Board, it's always been seven?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. Okay. And when you said "yes" there, you mean
- the whole time you've been on the Board, there's always
- 24 been seven Board members, right?
- 25 A. Correct.

12:58:28-12:59:22 Page 6 01:00:28-01:02:02 Page 8

- 1 Zoom deposition, either, right?
- 2 A. No.
- 3 Q. Okay. So, a couple of deposition ground rules
- 4 and then --
- 5 A. I've been deposed in a Federal case. I've been
- 6 deposed in other cases, like insurance, stuff like that.
- 7 Q. Okay. We'll talk about that some more in a
- 8 minute here; but let's start with just a couple of basic
- 9 rules for depositions, which are especially important
- 10 for Zoom depositions.
- So, the first thing is it's very important
- 12 that you give audible answers to questions. If you want
- to say "yes" or you want to say "no," say those words.
- 14 Don't shake your head and nod your head because that
- stuff can't be picked up by the court reporter and will
- 16 never be clear through the camera.
- Does that make sense?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. It's important in normal depositions but it's
- 20 extra important in Zoom depositions that you let me
- 21 finish my question before you answer it and that I let
- 22 you finish your answer before I ask my next question.
- So, let's both try to do our best not to talk over each
- 24 other. Okay?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Okay. Now, you know the Plaintiff, Christopher
- 2 Hardy; is that right?
- 3 **A. Yes.**
- 4 Q. Okay. And Mr. Hardy used to work for the
- 5 Carthage Independent School District, right?
- 6 A. Correct.
- 7 Q. Okay. I want to start today -- and I'm going
- 8 to try to go somewhat in chronological order. So, I
- 9 want to start today by talking about Mr. Hardy getting
- 10 hired by Carthage Independent School District.
- Were you involved in the process of hiring
- 12 Mr. Hardy?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Okay. Can you explain what the Board's role in
  - 15 that was versus what the superintendent's role was?
  - L6 A. The Board's role was to approve for hire
- 17 members that the superintendent brought to us for the
- 18 position that we had agreed to add to the district. The
- 19 superintendent's role was to seek out qualified
- 20 individuals for the position of an RSO officer -- SRO
- 21 officer.
- 22 Q. All right. So, I want to talk about this SRO
- 23 position guite a bit today; but we'll get to that in a
- 24 minute. I want to start by just talking at a basic
- 25 level.

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1 If I understood your answer, the

- superintendent found a group of candidates and presented
- them to the Board; is that right?
- 4 A. Yes.

01:02:02-01:03:12

- 5 Q. Okay. And then what exactly was your role?
- Did the Board pick who got hired; or did they just
- approve some subset, some group, of those candidates?
- How did that work? 8
- 9 A. Well, the Board approved who would be qualified
- for the job. That was the Board's position on it.
- 11 Q. Okay. Do you have a recollection of how many
- 12 candidates the superintendent brought to you for this
- SRO position? 13
- 14 A. It's been such a long time. I can't exactly
- 15 recall how many individuals that was brought at this
- time. 16
- 17 Q. Okay. But Mr. Hardy was one of the individuals
- who was presented; is that right?
- 19 A. No. Mr. Hardy was not brought to the Board.
- 20 Mr. Hardy was recommended by myself and
- another Board member after the search had initially 21
- 22
- 23 Q. Okay. Why did you recommend Mr. Hardy?
- 24 A. After the deliberation that we had had as Board
- members, we wanted someone who would be qualified not

01:04:50-01:05:55

Mr. Hardy?

- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. 2
- A. Yeah. He spoke about -- something about 3
- 4 Mr. Hardy would mess with young girls or something like
- 5 that. It was outrageous what he brought to me, you
- 6 know; and I just kind of told him I don't know anything
- 7 about that.
- And then he spoke to me that if anything 8
- 9 happened, you know, it would be held against me.
- Q. (By Mr. Foster) Was there anything specific 10
- that he brought to your attention? I mean, did he, you 11
- 12 know, identify a specific incident or something he'd
- heard about in the community; or was it more sort of 13
- 14 vague?
- 15 A. Just vague.
- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. 16
- 17 And I'm just going to remind you,
- 18 Mr. Hicks, anything that was mentioned during closed
- 19 session, we need to make sure to not answer those
- questions. So, just bring that to our attention because 20
- that could possibly violate a law with personal 21
- responsibility under the law. So, just anything that is 22
- asked of you that was mentioned in closed session, you
- need to bring that to our attention and not answer those 24
- 25 questions.

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- 1 only for working as an officer but someone who had some
- school experience. But it was a plus for Mr. Hardy
- because he had relationships in the community, also.
- 4 Q. Did the superintendent present at least some of
- his own candidates?
- 6 A. If I remember correctly, yes, he did.
- 7 Q. And at this time the superintendent was a
- Dr. Glenn Hambrick, right?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Okay. Do you recall at the time what
- Mr. Hambrick's opinion was of whether they should hire 11
- Mr. Hardy or not? 12
- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. 13
- 14 Q. (By Mr. Foster) You can still answer the
- question if you understood it; but if you didn't, I'm 15
- happy to rephrase it. 16
- 17 A. I can't answer about his opinion, but I can
- tell you what he spoke to me was he was not in favor. 18
- 19 Q. And did he explain why he wasn't in favor?
- 20 MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form.
- 21 A. Again, I can't speculate what his opinion was;
- 22 but based on what he told me was about hearsay, that he
- 23 had heard things on Mr. Hardy.
- 24 Q. (By Mr. Foster) Okay. Was he specific -- did
- he tell you what he claimed to have heard about

- THE WITNESS: Okay. Yeah. But what I
  - stated was --
- 3 MS. MOONEY: If it was just a personal
- 4 conversation, yes.
  - **THE WITNESS:** -- personal conversation,
- 6 ves.

5

11

- 7 MR. FOSTER: Andrea, I just want to make
- sure I understand you-all's position on this. You-all's
- 9 position is that the witness can't answer any questions
- about what happened at closed session because why? 10
  - MS. MOONEY: Because under the law, if a
- 12 Board member talks about what occurred in a closed meeting, they have personal liability for that, criminal 13
- and civil, which can include a fine, I think, of up to 14
- \$20,000 and jail time. 15
- MR. FOSTER: Okay. You don't have to do 16
- it right now, but at some point can you send me whatever 17
- you think the statutory authority is for that? 18
- 19 MS. MOONEY: Sure.
- 20 Q. (By Mr. Foster) So, from what you've said so
- far, it sounds like Dr. Hambrick was not in favor of 21
- hiring Mr. Hardy. Is that fair? 23 MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form.
- 24 A. Once again, the personal opinion -- you know, I
  - would say that's your conclusion.

22

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10

18

- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form.
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. (By Mr. Foster) And you did, in fact, sign
- 4 that, right?
- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. 5
- A. It was not to sign. It was to agree with.
- Q. (By Mr. Foster) Help me out with that. 7
- How were you supposed to indicate that you 8
- 9 agreed with it?
- 10 A. Just a school policy that with any progress or
- any meeting that was in closed session, which was 11
- procedure, that it was -- after the situation with 12
- Mr. Hardy, it was being read out to the public -- to the 13
- Board members as we went into closed session. 14 15 Q. Do you know why the decision was made to read
- that policy to the school board? 16
- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. 17
- 18 A. Not for sure, but I have an idea.
- Q. (By Mr. Foster) What's your idea? 19
- 20 MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form.
- 21 A. Just speculating.
- Q. (By Mr. Foster) Speculate. 22
- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. 23
- 24 A. It was to cover hisself, I guess. I don't
- 25 know.

- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form.
- 2 A. Correct.
- Q. (By Mr. Foster) So, I'm going to ask a bunch of 3

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- 4 questions; and my prediction is that your lawyers will
- instruct you not to answer every single one of them. 5
- 6 Okay? Here we go.
- 7 Was there a discussion about the decision
- 8 to terminate Chris Hardy during a closed session of the
- 9 school board?
  - MS. MOONEY: Objection to form and
- 11 objection to any discussions that were held in closed
- 12 session and instruction not to respond.
- A. No comment. 13
- Q. (By Mr. Foster) Did Mr. Hambrick --14
- 15 Dr. Hambrick ever discuss during a closed session
- exactly why he was making the choices he was making to 16
- cut the budgets and the way he was cutting them? 17
  - MS. MOONEY: Objection to form and
- objection to anything that was discussed in closed 19
- session and instruction to the witness not to answer. 20
- 21 A. No comment.
- Q. (By Mr. Foster) Did the school board, in closed 22
- 23 session, ever discuss the backlash from the community
- regarding the termination of Chris Hardy? 24
- 25 MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. And

03:41:28-03:43:07 Page 102 03:44:53-03:59:14 Page 104

- 1 Q. (By Mr. Foster) When you say "hisself," you
- mean Hambrick?
- 3 A. The superintendent.
- 4 Q. We talked a lot earlier today about how you --
- when the decision was being made to hire Mr. Hardy,
- there was a conversation that you had with Mr. Hambrick and some comments that Mr. Hambrick made about some
- allegations regarding Mr. Hardy and some inappropriate 8
- 9

7

- 10 Do you remember talking about that?
- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. 11
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. (By Mr. Foster) Was it just you and Hambrick
- who had that conversation, or was there another member 14
- of the school board there with you? 15
- MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form. 16
- 17 A. When the recommendation was brought up to hire
- Mr. Hardy, it was not only myself, it was another Board 18
- member of Mr. Frank Willis, who also was in a meeting --19
- 20 not meeting -- but was with me when we recommended
- Mr. Hardy to have an opportunity for the position. 21
- 22 Q. (By Mr. Foster) So, this conversation that you
- 23 had with Mr. Hambrick that we talked about before today,
- that would have been you, Mr. Hambrick, and Frank 24
- Willis, right? 25

- objection as to anything discussed during closed session
- and instruction to the witness not to answer.
- A. No comment.
- Q. (By Mr. Foster) Did Dr. Hambrick give any
- public comment that you're aware of regarding the budget 6
- 7 MS. MOONEY: Objection. Form.
- A. No, not to my -- not that I remember. 8
- 9 MR. FOSTER: All right. Give me five
- minutes. I'm just about winding up here. I just want 10
- to look over my outline and look through the rest of the 11
- exhibits I picked. I might have a couple more 12
- questions, maybe not. We'll see. But let's take five. 13
- (Recess taken) 14
- 15 MR. FOSTER: Andrea, I want to understand
- and -- make sure I understand the basis of the school's
- objection to this witness testifying about matters 17 raised in closed session. 18
- 19 I assume that even if I was prepared to
- eject Mr. Hardy from this call and agree to designate 20
- the remainder of this deposition as attorneys' eyes only 21
- via stipulation for now, followed up with a protective 22
- 23 order in the next couple of days -- the Eastern District
- standard order is fine -- you still would not allow him
- 25 to answer these questions, right?

03:59:16-04:00:09

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- 1 MS. MOONEY: Correct.
- 2 MR. FOSTER: That's right? Sorry. I
- 3 didn't hear you.
- 4 MS. MOONEY: Correct.
- 5 MR. FOSTER: Okay. Great.
- 6 In that light, then, Mr. Hicks, I don't
- 7 have any further questions for you at this time.
- 8 **EXAMINATION**
- 9 BY MS. MOONEY:
- 10 Q. Mr. Hicks, I'm going to try to be as succinct
- 11 as a lawyer can be with you.
- So, you were asked earlier by counsel
- whether you agreed to have us as your counsel.
- 14 Did you want to expand on that a little
- 15 bit more?
- 16 A. Well, when he -- when he spoke to me, I thought
- 17 he was talking about did I have a personal lawyer here.
- 18 I didn't understand the fact that he was talking about
- was I being represented by the school.
- 20 In my school capacity you are the lawyers
- 21 for the school district, and in that capacity you are
- 22 representing me.
- 23 Q. Okay. And do you object to us representing you
- 24 today at this deposition?
- 25 A. Not in that position, no.

- (Discussion off the record)
- 2 Q. (By Ms. Mooney) Do you need me to ask the
- 3 question again?
- 4 A. Yes.
- Q. The policy that we discussed from 2015 CKE that
- 6 was actually passed, the Board had to vote to approve
- 7 that, correct?
- 8 MR. FOSTER: Objection. Form.
- 9 A. Correct.
- 10 Q. (By Ms. Mooney) And did you vote for or against
- it, or you don't remember?
- 12 A. I don't remember.
- 13 Q. But the bottom line is Mr. Hardy was considered
- 14 an at-will employee because he did not have a contract,
- 15 correct?
- 16 MR. FOSTER: Objection. Form.
- 17 A. At that basis he would have been considered an at-will employee.
- 19 Q. (By Ms. Mooney) So, let's just say he's Chief
- of Police; and that's his title. That's what he ended
- 21 up having as his title.
- 22 Does Chief of Police have any entitlement
- 23 under the law to a contract?
- MR. FOSTER: Objection. Form.
- 25 A. Not under the constitutional law; but if it's

04:00:11-04:01:10 Page 106 04:02:30-04:03:36 Page 108

- 1 Q. In that capacity?
- 2 A. Right.
- 3 Q. And would you have any of the information that
- 4 you provided earlier to these questions if not but for
- 5 your role as a board of trustee -- as a member of the
- 6 Board of Trustees?
- 7 A. State it again.
- 8 Q. Would you have any of the answers to the
- 9 questions that you provided earlier if you were not a
- 10 member of the Carthage ISD Board of Trustees?
- 11 A. No.
- 12 Q. So, we talked earlier about Mr. Hardy and that
- 13 he came in 2014 and at the time there was some thought
- 14 he may have a contract and then he ended up not having a
- 15 contract.
- 16 Do you recall that conversation?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. And that the policy that we discussed, that was
- actually passed in 2015, the Board of Directors voted on
- 20 that, correct, because a policy doesn't get passed
- 21 unless the Board votes on it?
- MR. FOSTER: Objection. Form.
- THE REPORTER: A moment, please.
- Mr. Foster's objection overrode the
- 25 witness' answer.

- 1 in Board policy, he is supposed to have a contract.
- 2 Q. (By Ms. Mooney) But the Board policy in place
- 3 in 2015 did not say that he had a contract, correct?
- 4 A. In 2015.
- 5 Q. Right. And, so, you've been a Board member for
- 6 how long for this school district?
- 7 A. Approximately 14 years.
- 8 Q. So, you're familiar with there's types of
- 9 employees and categories of employees in school
- 10 districts who are required to have contracts; and there
- are those that are not required to have contracts.
- 12 correct?
- 13 MR. FOSTER: Objection. Form.
- 14 A. Correct.
- 15 Q. (By Ms. Mooney) And a police officer is not
- required to have a contract under the law, correct?
- 17 MR. FOSTER: Objection. Form.
- 18 A. Under -- I'll state it again.
- Not under the law -- the constitutional
- 20 law; but as a Board law, if it's implemented in policy,
- 21 he's supposed to.
- 22 Q. (By Ms. Mooney) But the 2015 policy that we
- 23 looked at earlier did not have that -- did not have that
- in there, correct, that Mr. Hardy was entitled to a
- 25 contract?